

## **FIRST STEPS Summary of**

### **Family's rights, procedural safeguards and assurances**

#### **Written Informed Consent**

First Steps needs your permission to take any actions that affect your child. You will be asked to give your consent in writing before we evaluate, assess, provide services or make any changes in services. You will be told all about the activity before you give your consent. You can decide not to give permission or withdraw permission for an activity at any time.

#### **Access to Records**

Your child's records are available to you. You can see anything in the record about your child and family. You can get a copy if you want one. If you do not understand the way records are written, the information will be explained to you in a way you understand. If you think your child's records are wrong, you can ask First Steps to correct the information. If First Steps disagrees, you can request a hearing.

#### **Written Notice of Rights**

You have been given a Family Rights Handbook for First Steps that tells all about your rights. It also tells what to do if you think your rights have been violated. Your service coordinator will use the book to talk to you about your rights. A First Steps Parent Consultant is also available to answer any questions about the Family Rights Handbook.

#### **Dispute Resolution**

If you and the First Steps team do not agree on plans or services, or if you have other complaints about First Steps, there are ways to resolve your concerns quickly. The Family Rights Handbook for First Steps has a section on Mediation, Due Process and Record Review. Your service coordinator will use the book to talk to you about how to request a hearing.

#### **Confidentiality**

Information on your child and family is confidential. First Steps values the information you and other service and health care providers have learned about your child. Such information will only be shared with authorized persons involved in your child's services. We will not share the information with anyone else without your written permission unless required by law.

#### **Right to Refuse Services**

With the other members of the First Steps team, you will consider which services can best help you accomplish the outcomes that you want for your child and family. You will be asked to give your consent for services and to participate in those services. You do not have to consent to all services recommended. You can say no to some services and still get the services you do want. If you decide to try other services later, you can give your consent then.

#### **Transition**

When a child reaches 36 months of age, early childhood services are provided by the school system. So when your child is between 30 and 36 months of age, if they are still needing services, First Steps will send contact information (name, birth date, parent/guardian, address, phone) to the school to identify for them the children in First Steps who may be transitioning and eligible for services from the schools at age three. This way services can be picked up by the school system without long delays. However, when you are contacted by the schools, you have the right to refuse the services offered by the schools.